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**CANADIAN CORPS  
TRENCH  
STANDING ORDERS.**

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CANADIAN CORPS  
TRENCH  
STANDING ORDERS.

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## CANADIAN CORPS

# TRENCH STANDING ORDERS.

### 1. DUTIES.

(a) One Officer per company and one N.C.O. per platoon will always be on duty.

(b) By night the Officer and N.C.O. on duty will frequently patrol the trench line, to see that the sentries are alert and to enquire whether they have any information to report about the enemy.

(c) The N.C.O. coming on duty will go round and post new sentries with the N.C.O. coming off duty.

(d) The length of each tour of duty will depend on the number of Officers and N.C.Os. available in the company. *Normally* each tour should be : by night two hours, by day four hours, day commencing at morning "Stand to," and night commencing at evening "Stand to." In inclement weather it may be advisable to reduce the tour to one hour.

(e) N.C.Os. after posting sentries will report "All correct" or otherwise to the Officer on duty.

(f) The Officer on duty will be responsible for sending in the reports required by Battalion Headquarters, unless there is anything unusual to report, when this duty will be performed by the Company Commander.

(g) Men will be warned for duty by the platoon N.C.O. on duty. This will be done at evening "Stand to."

(h) On being detailed for duty, a man will be informed at which hours he will come on duty.

(i) When possible to do so, notice boards will be placed in each section's trench, on which will be pinned, daily, all orders regarding working parties, and a list of the men in the section, giving the times at which they will come on sentry and other duty.

(j) Except under special circumstances—such, for instance, as a sentry being killed or wounded—no sentry will be relieved by another man unless the relief is properly carried out in the presence of a N.C.O.

## 2. SENTRIES (By Night).

(a) Sentries will be posted every two hours, except under bad weather conditions, when the length of the tour of sentry duty may be reduced.

(b) From evening "Stand to" till morning "Stand to" one sentry to every four men will be posted. If wiring or digging parties are out in front, or listening posts are numerous, this number may be reduced.

(c) The next relief will remain within reach of the sentry.

(d) Every sentry is to be regularly posted by a N.C.O., who will explain to him his duties and the front to be watched, and ascertain that the sentry and his relief are aware of the position of his own Company and Battalion Headquarters, and of the Section and Platoon Commanders, the sentries on either side, and whether there are any patrols or working parties out in front. Should there be salients in the line, the sentry will be carefully instructed, so as to avoid any possibility of him firing towards his own trenches.

(e) By night or in places which have the reputation of being dangerous—i.e., where

enemy are suspected of mining, advanced posts, etc.—no man should ever be posted alone. There should either be a double sentry post or the next relief should rest within kicking distance of the sentry.

## (By Day.)

(f) The number of sentries required depends on the proximity of the enemy's trench line and whether a good view to the front can be obtained: normally one to every four bays is sufficient.

(g) Every sentry will be provided with a periscope.

(h) Well protected "look out" posts for sentries will be built along the front trench line.

(i) As little challenging as possible will be done by sentries, and then only in a low tone of voice.

## 3. "STAND TO."

"Stand to" will take place one hour before daylight and one hour before dark. All ranks will be present at this parade.

Rifles, ammunition, equipment, box respirators and clothing, etc., will be inspected. Rapid loading will be practised. The firing position of every man will be tested to see whether he can hit the bottom edge of our wire. Orders will be issued and steps taken to see that the men understand them. After "Stand to" in the morning and before "Stand to" in the evening, rifles will be thoroughly cleaned and oiled.



#### 4. NIGHT CONDITIONS.

In the event of the weather being foggy the order "Night Conditions" will be given by Battalion Commanders, upon which all defensive dispositions adopted for the night, *i.e.*, extra sentries, &c., will be continued, or put into effect, until the order is cancelled.

#### 5. ALERTNESS.

Anything seen or heard in connection with the enemy, such as movements of individuals, transport wagons, troops, working parties, &c., is to be reported to the nearest Officer.

#### 6. PATROLS.

Patrols will never be sent out without definite orders as to what is required of them. They will go out by a listening post, where such exists.

When patrols are going out, warning will be given sufficiently far in advance for sentries, listening posts, &c., to be notified.

The password will be communicated by runner; the telephone is never to be used for this purpose.

The Officer on duty will be responsible that all listening posts and sentries are warned of the strength of the patrol and the approximate hour of departure and return, and the point it intends to return to. Word will be passed quickly along the line of sentries that a patrol is out.

#### 7. RIFLES, EQUIPMENT AND AMMUNITION.

##### Carrying and Wearing of.

(a) Equipment will always be worn by the garrison of the front trench.

(b) All ranks will wear steel helmets.

(c) Rations and carrying parties, orderlies, &c., will wear bandoliers and carry rifles, bayonets and box respirators.

(d) Parties at work may be permitted to "pile" or "ground" arms and take off equipment.

Wiring parties out in front of the fire trench will sling the rifle.

(e) The magazine will be kept charged with five rounds.

(f) Sentries will have a round in the chamber, but will unload when relieved.

Except as stated above, or when it is necessary to shoot, a round will never be kept in the chamber. Cut-offs will always be "in" and safety catches "back." In the case of rifles unprovided with cut-offs, the cartridges will be pressed down and the bolt engaged over it and thrust home.

(g) Bayonets will always be fixed in front line trenches, except in the case of N.C.Os, on duty moving up and down the trenches, who will always carry their rifles.

##### Care of Rifles.

(h) Rifles and ammunition will be inspected at morning and evening "Stand to," when rapid loading will also be practised.

(i) In very cold weather sentries will occasionally work the bolt of the rifle, to prevent the striker becoming frozen. For the same reason, in cold weather, men will sleep with their rifles close to the body. Breech-covers will be kept on rifles except those of sentries.

(j) Reserve boxes of S.A.A. will be kept in deep dug-outs and will not be opened except on emergency. All daily expenditure will be from open boxes kept at Company Headquarters for the purpose.

(k) All loading will be from pouch or bandolier; no ammunition must ever be placed on the ground or parapet.

#### Disposal of Rifles, Equipment and Ammunition.

(l) Wounded and men going sick will, if able, wear their equipment and carry their rifles. The rifles and equipment of men unable to carry them and also those of dead men will be sent back to the dressing station. All other rifles, however badly damaged, and equipment damaged or not required, will be sent back to the Quartermaster. Damaged cartridges and empty cases will be collected and returned to the Quartermaster, under company arrangements.

#### Ammunition.

(m) Every man will have 120 rounds in his possession.

(n) Platoon Commanders will report at evening "Stand to" whether their ammunition is correct or otherwise.

### 8. CARE OF BOMBS AND GRENADES.

(a) Only a small percentage of bombs will be kept in the front trenches. These will be kept in a well-protected and dry bomb receptacle.

(b) Bomb stores will be built in the end of communication trenches in the support line.

(c) Detonators and fuzes, except in the front line system, will normally be kept in tins and not in the bombs.

(d) The Battalion Bombing Officer will make frequent inspections of all bombs and grenades.

(e) The alarm posts for bombers will be close to where the bomb stores are placed.

(f) Ammunition boxes in the trenches will be examined frequently to see if the lids work easily.

### 9. MACHINE AND LEWIS GUNS.

(a) Lewis guns will be used in the front line for defence. Defensive positions for Lewis guns should be carefully selected in connection with the wire entanglements in front of the position. These positions will be provided with trench mountings, as far as the issue thereof permits, and each gun will be allotted definite lines of fire and definite tasks in the defence. Vickers machine guns may be employed in the front line to cover some particular

point or for special enfilade purposes, but, where the ground permits, they should be sited to cover the front line by enfilade fire from positions in rear of it.

Except in cases of emergency, fire will not be opened from "battle" positions.

(b) During an enemy's bombardment, Machine and Lewis guns will be withdrawn to dug-outs, which must be provided for all gun detachments in the front system.

Concealed splinter-proof Machine and Lewis gun emplacements should be constructed where possible to give protection against a shrapnel barrage.

(c) At night Machine and Lewis guns, when not in use, will be kept laid on definite night lines.

(d) One man per detachment will always be on duty with a Machine or Lewis gun. He will be provided with a periscope.

(e) Range cards, Standing Orders, Fire Orders and Inventory will be prepared and kept at each Machine gun emplacement or Lewis gun position.

## 10. TRENCH MORTARS.

(a) Trench mortar emplacements should not be sited close to communication trenches, or much used trenches.

(b) Trench mortars will be manned and ready for action at all times.

When not engaging special targets they will be laid on defensive night lines.

## 11. ARRANGEMENTS IN CASE OF ATTACK.

(a) Battalion Commanders will be responsible that all ranks know what to do in case of bombardment, gas or attack by the enemy.

(b) Arrangements must be made for getting men quickly out of deep dug-outs to repel an assault.

(c) All Officers' servants, bombers, orderlies, &c., will have duties allotted to them to perform in case of attack.

(d) Certain sections of bombers and riflemen will be allotted definite alarm posts, where they will be held in readiness to deliver local counter-attacks immediately should the enemy succeed in gaining a footing in our trenches.

(e) Battalion Commanders will be responsible for assigning positions, and the action to be taken in case of attack by tunnellers and engineers who may be working in their areas.

(f) Commanders will constantly test their defensive arrangements by practising an alarm at uncertain hours.

## 12. GAS ALERT.

The orders contained in "Standing Orders for Defence against Gas (S.S. 193)" will be enforced throughout the Corps.

The Alert, Ready, and Precautionary Zones therein referred to are laid down in "Instructions regarding precautions to be taken against hostile gas attacks" as issued by Corps and Divisions.



### 13. PRECAUTIONS TO BE TAKEN IN AN AREA WHERE THERE IS MINING ACTIVITY.

(a) In sectors where the enemy is known to be mining, each company in the front line will have parties told off to be always ready to rush forward and occupy the near lip of a crater should the enemy explode a mine, and to consolidate the new post, joining it up with front line.

(b) Emergency dumps will be formed containing the necessary tools and engineering material for the work of consolidation.

(c) In the event of one of our own mines being exploded, a clear space of 5 yards will be kept on either side of the mouth of the mine shaft.

### 14. FIRING AT AEROPLANES.

Firing at aeroplanes will not be permitted except by order of an Officer.

### 15. COMMUNICATIONS.

(a) All ranks using the telephone must understand that the Germans have listening apparatus, and that if messages of value to the enemy are sent, the sender will be severely punished.

The restrictions in the use of the telephone as laid down in para. 3 of "First Army Instructions regarding Communications in the Danger Zone" must be clearly understood and implicitly observed by all concerned.

(b) Artillery lines will be laid on one side of a trench, Infantry lines on the opposite side.

(c) The Infantry Brigade Signal Officer will exercise general supervision over all lines in the Brigade Area, and will notify the

O.C. Signal sub-section of the Artillery Brigade when any artillery lines require attention or relaying. He will assist the artillery whenever it may be possible to do so.

(d) Lines will be laid as low as possible, preferably not more than 9 inches from the bottom of trench. They will be picketed into grooves cut into the side of the trench, the pickets being securely driven in at every re-entrant bend and at every 10 yards along the straight.

(e) Lines will be clearly labelled at every hundred yards, and at every junction with another line.

(f) All lines will be carefully patrolled at least once daily.

(g) One telephonist will always be on duty at each signal station.

(h) Telephone communication to Battalion Headquarters and the company on each flank will be frequently tested.

(i) All "dead" lines will be reeled up at once.

(j) Every man is to know the position of his Platoon Commander's shelter and the Company Headquarters.

(k) At least two men per section of the support and reserve companies must be able to act as guides to all the Company Headquarters of the Battalion.

(l) All Officers must know the shortest route from their own Headquarters to those of the company on their flanks and to their own Battalion Headquarters.

(m) It is the duty of every Officer or man to fasten any loose wire that he may see which has become temporarily detached.

(n) All Officers and company runners must know the location of the nearest trench wireless set, and the shortest way to it.

(o) Battalions or other Units moved up into support or separated from their normal telephone connection will at once send two cyclist orderlies or runners to the nearest Signal office to report the exact location of their Headquarters. These orderlies will remain at the Signal office for the purpose of delivering messages, etc., to their Units.

(p) **Pigeon Service.**

- (i) Pigeons in the trenches must be kept under shelter as far as possible. A bird whose wings are caked with mud is unable to fly.
- (ii) Birds should only be fed once a day, one hour before sunset, and should not be fed until they have been away 24 hours from the loft.
- (iii) The message carrier must be attached to the lower part of the leg of the pigeon which has no ring, and care must be taken not to stop circulation by pinching the clips.
- (iv) Messages must be written on the form supplied—Pigeon Service Message Books (A.B. 418)—and all the spaces on the form should be correctly filled up.
- (v) It is generally advisable to send two birds, each carrying a copy of the same message.
- (vi) Pigeons must be released not later than one hour before sunset, otherwise the birds may not home. Pigeons will not home at night.

(vii) Pigeons should never be released in a thick mist or fog, as they get lost and cannot home.

(viii) On relief the incoming Battalion will ascertain when pigeons taken over are to be released.

## 16. TIME-TABLES AND ORGANISATION OF WORK.

(a) A time-table will be drawn up by each Company Commander. In this time-table he will allot hours of work, rest and meals.

(b) Working parties will be properly organised. Definite tasks will be allotted. Each Commander of a working party should know what work is expected from his party before the hour appointed to commence, so that no time is wasted in getting to work.

(c) Unless it cannot be avoided, men should never be taken for sentry duty without having had a reasonable period of rest, and when this becomes necessary a report should be made to the C.O.

## 17. TOOLS.

Tools should not be stored in large dumps, but distributed in small tool stores throughout the trench.

All dug-outs will be provided with a complement of picks and shovels. These arrangements will facilitate the rescue of men buried by shell fire.

## 18. WORKING PARTIES.

(a) The command of a working party involves leadership of the highest order, and young Officers and N.C.Os. should only be detailed for this duty after having attended as supernumeraries.

The outline and specification of the work is the duty of the engineer; the fulfilment of the task is the duty of the working party. To reduce the time a working party is engaged, the engineer must have his arrangements complete before its arrival, and the number of the party should never be in excess of the men who can be fully employed. The Commander of the working party should invariably know the nature and extent of the task before the arrival of the party.

(b) Working parties will, as far as possible, consist of complete Units—*i.e.*, section, platoon or company—which will invariably be commanded by their own Officers.

## 19. UNDERCUTTING TRENCH SIDES.

The undercutting of trench sides to make shelters is forbidden.

## 20. LOG BOOKS AND TRENCH STORE BOOKS.

(a) Each Company Commander will keep a log book in which will be entered up daily the work done. This log book will be handed over from one Commander to another on relief.

(b) A trench store book will also be kept in which will be entered up all trench stores issued to the company. On relief, the incoming Company Commander will give a receipt to the outgoing Commander for all trench stores taken over.

(c) Commanding Officers are personally responsible that no trench stores, bath mats, etc., are used as firewood.

## 21. RATIONS AND COOKING.

(a) Ration parties from the support and reserve trenches will be made up in complete Units as in 18 (b).

(b) The Company Quartermaster-Sergeant will accompany the ration parties for his company and report his arrival to the Company Commander.

(c) Great care is to be taken that ration and carrying parties make as little noise as possible.

(d) Cooking, if possible, will be done behind the front line trenches and should be concentrated by sections or companies. Steps must be taken to ensure that as little smoke as possible is made by the cooks' fires.

(e) Unused rations will be returned to the Quartermaster.

(f) Waste in any form will be discouraged.

(g) Arrangements should be made to ensure that soup or some hot drink should be available for the men between midnight and 4 a.m.

## 22. RATION PARTIES.

Rations and stores will be carried up to the trenches by supports and reserves and not by the garrison of the front trench.

## 23. RUM.

(a) Rum will always be kept under the personal charge of the Company Commander.

(b) The best time for a rum issue is in the early morning.



(c) No issue of rum will be made, except in the presence of an Officer; any rum left over will be handed back to the charge of the Company Commander.

(d) Men undergoing punishment for drunkenness will receive no issue of rum for 14 days after the offence, unless it is necessary for medical reasons.

#### 24. SANITATION.

(a) The importance of strict attention to sanitation should be impressed on all ranks.

(b) Empty tins or other refuse will be collected in receptacles kept for the purpose in the trenches and buried in a refuse pit.

(c) Latrines will be constructed in trenches leading from communication trenches. Where the bucket system is employed, chloride of lime or creosol will be freely used. The soil will be removed at night and buried in a deep pit, well away from the trenches, each day's deposit being covered; these pits will be filled in when within a foot of the top and labelled.

(d) Every man must ascertain the location of latrines as soon as possible after entering the trenches, and any fouling of trenches or saps will be considered a most serious offence.

(e) The Commanding Officer is responsible for sanitation in his Unit, and the Medical Officer will advise him in sanitary matters, making daily inspections of latrines, refuse pits and water arrangements. Under the Medical Officer, latrines and refuse pits will be attended to by the regimental sanitary men and water duties by the C.A.M.C. details attached.

## RELIEFS.

#### 25. GENERAL.

(a) Prior to taking over a new line of trenches, the Commanding Officer, Adjutant, Machine Gun Officer, Signalling Officer, Scout Officer and Company Commanders will reconnoitre the trenches.

(b) Machine guns will not be relieved at the same time as the infantry.

#### 26. POINTS TO BE NOTED BY COMPANY COMMANDERS.

(a) Number of men holding line to be taken over and distribution.

(b) Shelter accommodation.

(c) Work being done and proposed. To ensure a continuity of work, an Officer of the incoming Battalion should go over line in daylight.

(d) Condition of the wire and defences generally.

(e) Information as to the enemy, his habits, snipers, the work he is doing, &c.

(f) Water supply.

(g) Artillery support.

(h) Communications.

(i) Dangerous points.

(j) Lines of advance to be used in a counter-attack.

(k) Position of "shell trenches" or "feathers" or other cover from enemy artillery fire.



## 27. GUIDES.

(a) Arrangements will be made between the C.Os. of relieving and about to be relieved battalions as to places where guides will be provided by the latter to conduct the incoming troops to the trenches.

(b) One guide per platoon, one for each Company Headquarters, and one for Battalion Headquarters, will be provided.

These guides must know the exact spot where they will meet the relieving troops, and the best and safest way to the trenches.

## 28. SMOKING AND TALKING.

After leaving the rendezvous there is to be no smoking or talking till arrival in the trenches.

## 29. RATE OF MARCH TO TRENCHES.

The rate of marching to the trenches from billets will not exceed two miles an hour.

## 30. PROCEDURE ON ARRIVAL IN TRENCHES.

(a) The troops being relieved will not leave the trenches until all trench stores have been handed over and receipts received, all the relieving troops are in position and new sentries have been posted, and orders to move have been received from the Company Commander.

(b) Platoon Commanders will at once personally examine all firing positions, and satisfy themselves that each man can fire on the foot of the nearest part of our wire entanglement.

(c) They will examine the ammunition and bomb magazines, vermorel and other sprayers, and anti-gas solution vessels.

(d) The Gas N.C.O. of the incoming Company will take over all Gas Appliances (Strombos Horns, Gongs, etc.) from the Gas N.C.O. of the outgoing Company.

Completion of handing and taking over will be reported by both Gas N.C.Os. to their Company Commanders.

(e) When the relief is completed, O.C. Companies will report to that effect to Battalion Headquarters.

(f) Men will not be dismissed till the O.C. Company has received reports from all his Platoon Commanders that everything is in order.

## 31. PREVENTION OF CHILLED FEET AND FROSTBITE.

(a) Before marching to trenches, feet and legs will be washed, then thoroughly dried and rubbed with anti-frostbite grease or whale oil, under platoon supervision. Boots should be large enough for two pairs of socks, and puttees must be put on loosely.

(b) The march to the trenches will be in ankle boots. Every man will carry two pairs of spare socks, spare grease, and towel.

(c) On arrival at the trenches, take off ankle boots and wet socks, dry and grease feet, put on dry socks, gum boots (trench stores) or paper stockings and ankle boots.

(d) During the tour of the trenches, circulation must be kept up by movement; the restriction of the circulation of the lower limbs is the principal cause of chilled feet.

(e) Boots and puttees will be removed at least once in every 24 hours, feet and legs will be dried, rubbed and greased, and dry socks put on.

(f) Gum boots will be taken off before troops march out on relief, and will be handed over as trench stores to the relieving Unit.

(g) On arrival in billets feet will be washed and rubbed; dry socks, hot drinks and food will be provided under Battalion arrangements.

(h) Warming braziers made from 3 and 5-gallon oil drums will be provided, and a daily allowance of 2 lbs. coke and  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. charcoal per man in the trenches. An extra peasoup, tea and sugar ration will also be issued.

(i) C.Os. are responsible that all trench pumps on charge are kept in good repair and made use of to the fullest extent. The drier the trenches are, the fewer will be the cases of chilled feet.

(j) A daily foot inspection, under the supervision of an Officer, will be carried out while in the line.

### 32. SALVAGE.

It is the duty of all ranks to assist in the salvage of articles which may be used again, or which have any value for manufacturing purposes. The formation of Divisional Salvage Companies in no way absolves Units of their duty in this respect.

P. de B. RADCLIFFE, B.G.G.S.,

Canadian Corps.

January, 1918,

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